

Quinn House
Pleasantville, Pennsylvania

HABS No. Pa.-518

HABS
PA
61-PLEAV,
1-

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 5-Pennsylvania

Historic American Buildings Survey
J. Howard Hicks, District Officer
134 East 10th Street, Erie, Pennsylvania

61-15100

QUINN HOUSE
Pleasantville, Venango County, Pennsylvania

Owner (or Custodian)

Mrs. Wilbour Scofield.

Date of Erection

1843-46.

Architect

Probably Manly Colton Beebe.

Builder

Aaron Benedict.

Present Condition

Fair.

Number of Stories

One and a half with basement.

Materials of Construction

Sandstone, white pine siding, oak flooring, tar roofing paper.
Asbestos shingles.

Other Existing Records

Information and personal recollections given by Architect
M. C. Beebe of Pleasantville. Photographs. Personal
interviews.

Additional Data

Bibliography-History of Venango County by J.H. Newton,
published by J. A. Caldwell, Columbus, Ohio in 1879.

History of Venango County, published by Brown, Runk and
Co., Chicago, Illinois, 1890.

An illustrated History of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
by William H. Egle, M.D., published by DeWitt C.
Goodrich and Co., Harrisburg, Pa. 1876, County of
Venango.

PP
61-12547QUINN HOUSE
Pleasantville, Venango County, Pennsylvania

Hospitality was the word of welcome in the pioneer days of the United States. Most of the people had come across the Atlantic leaving lands that were fertile and settled with friends and relatives, to a country that in itself was as wild as it was beautiful. Dense forests in which wild animals prowled surrounded the narrow strip of land on which most of the inhabitants had landed and tried to cultivate. So that naturally folks were very glad to see each other. Those pioneers were so few. And that hospitality even extended to the houses that were built, and found expression in a type of house developed in the early days that literally extended arms of greeting to the guest. This was the type of house known as the wing or butterfly type. Probably it ought to have been called the house of welcome.

The Quinn House of Pleasantville, Venango County, Pennsylvania belongs to this style of house, and may be said to be a splendid example in that, the whole building is excellently balanced. It faces the east and appears to greet the rising sun with open arms and a smile, the smile being the arrangement of the central portion. A curved line drawn from the top of the doorway to the top of the pilasters on each corner of the main part would create a wide smiling effect.

The Quinn House is very closely related to the Free Methodist Church of Pleasantville, as the following information from Mr. M. C. Beebe will attest; "Mr. Edward House, a great grandson of Aaron Benedict, told me that Aaron Benedict built the Quinn house, in the 30's he thought, and that it was used as a parsonage until the present parsonage was built."

"My Grandmother, Mrs. M. C. Beebe, Sr., who came to Pleasantville, a bride, in 1852 always spoke of it as the 'Elder Spratt' house and at the time of the Centennial (Pleasantville) she thought he was the builder of it. But from the --History of Venango County, I find that Elder Spratt was the minister of the church from July 21st, 1848 to Aug. 26th, 1853 and putting all these bits of information together I deduce the fact that the present parsonage was not built till after 1853 and that from 1849 to the date of building of the new parsonage, this house was used as a parsonage."

"Now as to the date of the house, I think that Mr. House in placing it in the 30's placed it too early. He said he had nothing to support that date but thought that as it was one of the early houses of the town, that he estimated the date as sometime in the 30's."

QUINN HOUSE
Pleasantville, Venango County, Pennsylvania

"Being trained as an architect, from a study of early houses in town, the period of erection of which I am fairly certain I would say that to me the type of structure of the Quinn house denotes the middle forties rather than earlier."

The doorway of the central part of the Quinn house is reached by a flight of two stone steps, and creates the effect of distance by its design. The pilasters on each side of the doorway are plain with caps that are classical in style. These pilasters support a plain frieze, ornamented by a narrow moulding and surmounted by an entablature composed of crown mould and fascia, plancier and bed mould. An additional wooden step leads to the floor of the house. The door is a four paneled door with raised center panels and mouldings surrounding each panel. The keyhole is above the knob of the door. It is a relatively modern door.

A window is placed between the doorway and the corner pilaster on each side on the first floor, and one window directly over the doorway on the second floor. All of these windows are shuttered. The windows are two sash and have two lights to each sash, evidently remodeled from the original sash. The corner pilasters are surmounted by a plain return of the cornice in harmony with the doorway entablature. A wide moulding cornice completes the beauty of the center front part of the house.

The two symmetrical wings are nearly alike, each having a recessed porch directly next to the center portion of the main building. The wing to the left differing only in that the double windows are between the porch and the end, (a recent addition), while the part to the right has no windows. A pilaster ornaments each side of the porch and the corner of each wing, similar to those on the main portion of the house. A single step leads to each porch floor. Next to the main building on each side porch a shuttered window is placed with a door next to it, thus keeping the balance of the house nearly perfect. The elliptical arches of the porches suggest that the house may have been built earlier than 1843-46.

There is a chimney on each end of each wing, one in the center portion of the house and one on the kitchen. The roof is covered by modern tar paper roofing. The chimneys have a curved top with smoke aperatures on each side instead of the top. The north and south elevations follow closely the lines of the front of the house and match in cornice and pilaster the front effect.

The foundation is of hewn sandstone of various lengths to 6 feet. Cobble stones are used under the kitchen for foundation. The kitchen is a recent addition. The first floor has kitchen,

QUINN HOUSE
Pleasantville, Venango County, Pennsylvania

dining room, living room, two bed rooms and bath room. There are recessed nooks, formerly used as bed sinks. The second floor is reached by an enclosed stairway leading from the dining room. There are two rooms on this floor.

The first floor has fourteen windows in all. There are two entrances to the kitchen, one to the north and one to the south. The floor boards on the old part of the house are of random widths 9" to 11". The outside of the house is covered with white pine siding. The cellar entrance is also outside. The west elevation has two windows in the main part, first floor.

The Quinn House is owned by Mrs. Wilbour Scofield who bought it about six years ago, and who lies next door south. At present it is occupied by tenants.

No especial historical value, but representing a pioneer type of house of this part of Pennsylvania.

Anne Scott Baxter

Approved

Howard Hicks, District Officer
Dec. 7th 1936.